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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/806,816	07/06/2001	Meinhard Protz	10028.00	6006

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EXAMINER

BECKER, DREW E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1761

DATE MAILED: 02/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/806,816

Applicant(s)

PROTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Drew E Becker

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8, 10 and 11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8, 10 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 August 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The corrected drawing was received on August 11, 2004. This drawing is accepted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 5-8 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
4. Claim 7 recites pockets with "a slightly V-shaped manner". This limitation is broader than the previously cited limitation (claim 5) of a "V-shaped bottom". It is not clear whether it needs to be "V-shaped" or just "slightly V-shaped". It is not clear to what degree a shape would be "slightly V-shaped".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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6. Claims 5-8 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Torrez [Pat. No. 2,957,973].

Torrez teaches a carrier device comprising successively arranged, substantially parallel partitions (Figure 7, #48), receiving pockets between the partitions (Figure 7), two partitions between each set of pockets (Figure 7), the spacing and dimensions of the carrier device inherently being capable of accepting items of smaller size than the pockets, the partitions being arranged in a slightly V-shaped manner with an opening angle of more than 0° (Figure 7, #48), the partitions being made from flexible wire loops (column 3, line 25), and the carrier device inherently being capable of being stackable. Phrases such as “for handling and heat treating a plurality of rectangular bags or film packs” are merely preferred methods of using the claimed apparatus. A claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. MPEP 2114. Intended use has been continuously held not to be germane to determining the patentability of the apparatus, *In re Finsterwalder*, 168 USPQ 530. The manner or method in which a machine is to be utilized is not germane to the issue of patentability of the machine itself, *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235. A recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations, *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. The purpose to which an apparatus is to be put and expression relating apparatus to

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contents thereof during intended operation are not significant in determining patentability of an apparatus claim, *Ex parte Thibault*, 164 USPQ 666.

7. Claims 5-7 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Finnegan [Pat. No. 4,832,208].

Finnegan teaches a carrier device comprising successively arranged, substantially parallel partitions (Figure 1, #15, 18, 25, 28, 35, 38, 45, 48), receiving pockets with V-shaped bottoms between the partitions (Figure 1), two partitions between each set of pockets (Figure 1), the spacing and dimensions of the carrier device inherently being capable of accepting items of smaller size than the pockets, the partitions being arranged in a slightly V-shaped manner with an opening angle of more than 0° (Figure 1, #15, 18, 25, 28, 35, 38, 45, 48), and the carrier device inherently being stackable.

Phrases such as “for handling and heat treating a plurality of rectangular bags or film packs” are merely preferred methods of using the claimed apparatus. A claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. MPEP 2114. Intended use has been continuously held not to be germane to determining the patentability of the apparatus, *In re Finsterwalder*, 168 USPQ 530. The manner or method in which a machine is to be utilized is not germane to the issue of patentability of the machine itself, *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235. A recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus

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satisfying the claimed structural limitations, *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. The purpose to which an apparatus is to be put and expression relating apparatus to contents thereof during intended operation are not significant in determining patentability of an apparatus claim, *Ex parte Thibault*, 164 USPQ 666.

8. Claims 5-7 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Baxter [Pat. No. 3,591,032].

Baxter teaches a carrier device comprising successively arranged, substantially parallel partitions (Figure 3, #14-15), receiving pockets with V-shaped bottoms between the partitions (Figure 3, #12), two partitions between each set of pockets (Figure 3), the spacing and dimensions of the carrier device inherently being capable of accepting items of smaller size than the pockets, the partitions being arranged in a slightly V-shaped manner with an opening angle of more than 0° (Figure 1, #14-15), and the carrier device being stackable wherein the receiving pockets of a tray are positioned in gaps between the pockets of another carrier device (Figure 3). Phrases such as “for handling and heat treating a plurality of rectangular bags or film packs” are merely preferred methods of using the claimed apparatus. A claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. *MPEP 2114*. Intended use has been continuously held not to be germane to determining the patentability of the apparatus, *In re Finsterwalder*, 168 USPQ 530. The manner or method in which a machine is to be utilized is not germane

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to the issue of patentability of the machine itself, *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235. A recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations, *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647. The purpose to which an apparatus is to be put and expression relating apparatus to contents thereof during intended operation are not significant in determining patentability of an apparatus claim, *Ex parte Thibault*, 164 USPQ 666.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 5-8 and 10-11 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Drew E Becker whose telephone number is 571-272-1396. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thur. 8am-6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on 571-272-1398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Drew E Becker
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1761


DREW BECKER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
2-3-05